Since intention is the first thing with which scholars of the religion begin their works, due to its importance, honor, and the focus of Islam on it; we find it appropriate to begin a new Hijri year with it. We begin the new Hiri year and we welcome it by renewing our intentions by re-evaluating them, correcting them, calibrating them, seeking guidance, sharpening our resolve, and seeking steadfastness, since it is the anchor of all of that, and the mujahid is the most in need of that. Who is a mujahid without intention?

Intention has a great position in Islam to the extent that it enables a person to gain rewards without deeds, or to be rewarded for deeds that were not completed, as in the words of the Almighty: "Those who leave their homes and die while emigrating to Allah and His Messenger—their reward has already been secured with Allah"; that is, his reward is a duty upon Allah, and he who makes hijrah receives credit for a good deed, and this encompasses jihad and all other deeds. This is why our scholars have decided that intention is more important than action.

It may occur to the reader that this is an obvious topic in all aspects of religion. We say: This is true, but in the realm on jihad, it was emphasized due to the two-pronged peril of intention in it: On the one hand, too many lower earthly matters cling to intention, corrupting it and blocking it from its heavenly purpose, as in the Sahih: "A man fights for the spoils, a man fights for fame, and a man fights for position". These and others are all barriers and obstacles that stand in the way of the mujahid who takes up his sword and goes out carrying his soul on his palm. Consider the seriousness of intention in jihad, which is the pinnacle of Islam, from this perspective. Despite the high status of jihad in Islam, without sincere intention, it causes calamity upon its owner, as in Sahih Muslim from the hadith of Abu Hurayrah - may Allah be pleased with him: "The first person to be judged on the Day of Qiyyahmah is a man who was martyred... He said: I fought for you until I was martyred. Allah Almighty said: You lie, in fact you fought so it would be said: 'He was brave.' It was then said, the man was ordered to be dragged on his face until he was thrown into the Fire". May Allah protect us and you from it.

Intention is even more serious in jihad because of the danger associated with it, as it is a place where the mujahid puts himself in danger, adjacent to death, and exposed to demise. It is thus imperative for whoever is in this situation to be committed to his intention in preparation for meeting his Lord, Glory be to Him, and to have control over all aspects of his self.

The scholars of the religion have so extensively explained the ways to control and examine one's intention, and have expanded upon it so much, that there is not enough space here to present it all. However, we will summarize some of it in two matters. The first: Intention, due to it being private to the person and the importance of its precision, is calibrated by committing to it and re-evaluating it from time to time and then going through the same mentioned process over and over again. This is the best way to improve one's intention and to cleanse it from what clings to it that might impinge or invalidate it, and it is something that the mujahid should be aware of, assign it its proper level of importance, understand its value, and persevere in. The second: Struggling with the self in this regard because a precise clean intention cannot be accomplished except through strife and consistency, as the predecessors, may Allah have mercy on them, used to do. They endeavored toward calibrating their intentions throughout their lives, because they were certain that the lesson is eagerness, as it was narrated about them: "Be more concerned about approaching the task eagerly rather than about the task itself. Did you not hear Allah say: 'Allah only accepts from the righteous'". And those are the people who embrace these meanings, cleanse their selves, strive for a correct intention, seek sincerity, and achieve it, while also avoiding what impugns their intention, such as hypocrisy, whether small or large, and other things.

We have an example in the history of the ujahideen, past and present, regarding the correctness of their intentions, the sincerity of their intentions, and their shielding themselves from what may impugn them. The story of the Masked Man is well known, and how many Masked Men in our time ask for the same conditions to this day: "Do not send his name in a document to the Khalifah, and do not order anything for him as a reward for what he has done." And do not ask him who he is". How many Masked People lived among us, fleeing from fame. If they were present, they were not mentioned, and if they were absent, they were not missed. By Allah, because of them calamities were averted and ranks were steadfast, may Allah have mercy on them.

On the other hand, the field may impose orders and directives that may be thought to be contrary to sincerity, such as registering wills or authenticating letters. Know, O mujahid, that this is something that is subject to the discretion of the Amir. If it is decided that registering a will or documenting a deed has an overriding interest, then come forward and accept it with a reassured heart, anticipating the reward while re-asserting the intention of jihad and incitement, and do not excuse yourself out of fear of hypocrisy, for in that you are a mujahid with your body and tongue, conveying the call of your Prophet, inciting your brothers, igniting the resolve of those lagging behind, and stirring protectiveness in the souls of Muslims, so your words in this case will be like your actions, and may even be greater! How many mujahidin in the ranks are fighting death, or, if you wish, say: How many a leader leading the march, is the result of a speech, a will, or a video that touched a living heart and led it to the fields of executioner and the path of guidance? How many brothers made hijrah, struggled, were patient, and performed well who were motivated by a truthful word whose speaker was killed, but whose arrow remained effective, guiding the bewildered and piercing the livers of the kuffar? This is only accomplished with sincere intention, and regarding that tell tales without hesitation, for every mujahid has his story, and every person has what he intended.

This also applies to the brothers who support in the field of media, for their quiver is filled with arrows that if shot sincerely, will hit the heart of the truth. Thus, through their actions, Allah opens hardened hearts, deaf ears, and blind eyes. Similarly, we whisper in their ears the necessity of being on guard and wary of the subtle hypocrisy and arrogance that enters the hearts and to which many call today. In a time of reaping 'views and likes', a widespread affliction in the field of media, Allah is the One who helps. Fear Allah in calibrating your intentions and directing them to Allah Almighty alone, for from Him alone comes the reward. Whoever seeks fame and aims for it, it will be his only reward for His support, and he will get no other. And whoever encounters fame along the way, and likes it, should repel it, rebuke himself and remember that his knowledge and his words are from Allah and not from himself, for He is the one to bestow upon him and He is the Possessor of favor and grace, Glory be to Him, and if He wishes he withholds it from him, and let him beware lest Allah leaves him in charge of his soul, and whoever is left in charge of themselves will perish, may Allah protect us and you from the evils of ourselves. The discussion on that can go on for a long time and everyone knows themselves best, and each of you will receive according to what you intended.

All the above is indistinguishable from the issue of calibrating one's intention which the mujahid must recall in every movement and moment of stillness, day, or night. The close relationship between intention, determination, and steadfastness is associated with this. Intention sharpens the spirit, brings determination, and expels the listlessness that afflicts the believer on his way. Whenever the mujahid's spirits drag, the path feels prolonged, victory is delayed, the supporter fails to support him or is lazy, he recalls his intention and that it belongs to Allah Almighty and that Allah, Glory be to Him, now owes him a reward, incentivizing him to continue the path.

There is nothing more powerful than sincerity as a motivation to move forward and arouse one's resolve. Sincere and reformed intentions are among the most important means and reasons for the desired steadfastness, just as bad faith and corrupt intentions are among the most common causes of setback and failure. This is seen in jihad and other things. May Allah protect us and you. Whoever contemplates this with insight will be overcome by fear and awe and realize the status of intention as related to jihad and even all aspects of religion, so he will give it proper attention and not divert from his destination. Every person will be rewarded according to his intentions, and Allah is the reason for all intentions.